

ANTH106: Drugs Across Cultures

Writing Assessment Decoder: Some common simple writing problems and how to fix them...

Code	Problem	What you can do to improve
citation?	There is no reference for a quote or citation to support a statement of fact. Failing to reference all statements of fact, quotations, or paraphrasing of another author's work verges on or may constitute plagiarism.	In an academic essay, every statement of fact must be backed up with a reference, unless you are stating a fact about research that you have personally done. For every sentence you write, you should ask yourself, "Where did I originally get that information from?" and then be sure to mention your source, either with an in-text reference or footnote. This doesn't mean you need a reference at the end of every sentence. If you spend a whole paragraph summarising the work of one author, you might just say at the beginning of the paragraph, "In his classic statement on the different factors that affect a person's drug using experience, Zinberg (1984) argues that..."
convoluted	Text is excessively convoluted or complex, sometimes making it difficult to follow or undermining the clear links among the concepts and references.	Convoluted writing can occur for a number of reasons: 1) students try to accomplish too much in a single sentence and should allow things to become multiple sentences; 2) students think that complicated prose will appear more sophisticated or thoughtful – it doesn't! or 3) writing using a lot of cut and pasting and internal editing can make things become convoluted and hard to follow. If you write with a lot of cut and paste processing, you need to make sure to proofread.
first-person	Excessive use of the first person: e.g., 'I will show...', 'I will demonstrate...' 'My opinion is...'	First person should only be used when it adds to your argument in the sort of writing you're doing for this unit. In general, it's superfluous. We know it's your essay and your opinion; who else could be offering it? Ask yourself, 'Do I really need to put first person in here, or is it better without?' See the separate guidelines "How to insert your own opinion in academic writing" for more information.
frag	Fragment: a particular phrase is not actually a complete sentence, often because it lacks a verb or whole predicate.	If you start off a phrase as a subordinate clause (something like 'Because drugs have both a physiological and a social impact.' Or 'Whereas in the 1930s cannabis was considered a drug of violence.'), no matter how long that phrase, it is still a fragment, until you add an independent clause that it is modifying (e.g. "Whereas in the 1930s cannabis was considered a drug of violence, by the 1970s its image had changed and it was considered a 'drop out drug'"). If you're prone to this, try to write in less convoluted fashion and proofread out loud.
inflammatory	Especially with topics like drugs, students sometimes want to convey their own emotions in their writing, express their outrage, and produce heated, vivid prose.	The problem with inflammatory language is that it is the result of all that you have learned, and if you turn it on as you write, it will hit your readers long before their energy matches your fervour. You may come across as overly emotional and thus untrustworthy. I feel that if you write calmly and with balance and give your readers the space to have their own reactions, you are more likely to be persuasive.
'It is...' or 'There are...'	Author is beginning sentences too often with these phrases, which tends to weaken the quality of the writing.	If you're prone to this, you should just go through your writing looking for these phrases at the onset of sentences and try to get rid of them. Although it's no crime to use them once in a while, they can really rob your writing of energy, in part because they banish active verbs from the main sentence.
number	Nouns and verbs have to agree in number.	
padding or wordy	If you do not edit sufficiently, you may use 50 words where 10 would suffice. Especially when writers procrastinate until the last minute and feel that they have to achieve a minimum word count, writing can get frothy.	Generally (but not always), shorter writing is more powerful, efficient and persuasive. It's best to overwrite in length and then set yourself a goal of cutting 10% or 20%, trying to eliminate what is superfluous so that what is left is the best material you've come up with. It's ALWAYS better to be short and concise than long and fluffy, even if you're way <i>under</i> the suggested word limit!
paragraph?	Used in a variety of situations, such as when multiple major ideas are run into a single, overly-long paragraph, or when it is unclear what the central idea of a paragraph is (usually the case when a paragraph is missing a topic sentence or unifying theme).	Although some paragraphs have topic sentences, and some of these topic sentences come first in a paragraph, this is not always the case. But even a paragraph without a specific topic sentence has a unifying topic, even if it doesn't appear explicitly. Ask yourself if you can write a very short, one phrase summary of each paragraph, as if a line in an outline. If you cannot, you may not have a coherent paragraph or have an overly long one.

passive	Some writers use passive verbs, making the subject of sentences – the cause or actor in statements – obscure or mysterious.	The most powerful sentences are active statements with clear subjects and active verbs. Passive sentences are subtle and essential for making some kinds of arguments, but if you are making statements, consider if it might not be better to make them direct and active to increase the persuasiveness of your writing.
Proofread or awk	A general comment that some of the errors or awkwardness in phrasing could be fixed by better proofreading.	Most students think that writing a first draft is 95% of the work of writing a paper. Experienced writers think that it is a much smaller portion of the final effort, more like 60% or 70%. If you have trouble proofreading, print off a hard copy of your first draft, find a place where you are comfortable, and READ OUT LOUD.
rep	Word repetition (sometimes circling the repeated word): can occur when you use a word several times in quick succession or even when you use an unusual word just a few times in an essay.	The best way to deal with word repetition if you're not noticing it is to read your own writing OUT LOUD. Your ears catch repetition very quickly and effectively; your eyes are less discerning. In general, word repetition with key concepts may be a sign that you don't actually understand the concept well as you cannot offer another term in place of the single word. But don't just use the thesaurus function on your word processor to solve the problem (see w.c. below). That can be dangerous!
r.o.s.	Run-on sentences. Generally, if a sentence starts to get onto a fifth line, it's probably running on, but if you're good at it, you can make even a short sentence a run-on.	Don't be afraid of the full stop. Short sentences are no less intelligent than long ones. And especially if you do have a long sentence or a series of them, break up the rhythm with a short one. Often, student writers try to do too many things at once in a sentence, so it lurches one way and another until it's a run-on.
strawman	Students sometimes feel that their arguments are more effective if the opposing arguments are shallow and idiotic. They may create 'strawman' arguments, arguments that are so extreme, one-sided, or obviously wrong that they are easy to disprove.	In general, the only people persuaded by strawman arguments already share your idea. More reasonable, moderate, or sceptical readers will not long be persuaded if you undermine your own credibility. In general, the facts alone, without strawmen or inflammatory language, will persuade a reasonable reader better than if you are making simplistic arguments.
tangent	A thought or a quote are tangential, that is, they do not follow or contribute to the overall argument of the essay or section of the essay.	If this is occurring in your own writing, it may be because you don't have an outline, so it's hard to decide what does and what does not belong in a paragraph or section.
[text crossed out]	Often a sign that a phrase can be deleted without losing any of the sense of the sentence or anything essential to the argument. This is usually a sign of wordiness, especially if the phrases are hackneyed or formulaic.	In general, as discussed under 'padding or wordy,' unnecessary or formulaic phrases should be deleted. Be on the look out for the following: 'As such...,' 'In a sense...,' 'Somewhat...,' (If something is only 'somewhat,' why not find a better descriptor?); intensifiers like 'really,' 'very,' and 'absolutely'; words that are essentially synonyms being used in a series (example, 'cease and desist'); 'myself' (when you just mean 'I' or 'me')
they	'They' is a pronoun problem. 'They' refers to a plural subject. Increasingly, some students treat it as the gender neutral pronoun. 'A person has the right to enjoy themselves and take whatever drugs they choose...' You get my drift. In some cases, it can make your writing terribly confusing.	If the noun you're referring to is singular, 'she or he' (or 'he or she') is better than 'they.' Or rewrite the sentence so that the subject referred to is plural. If you've got several 'they's in a sentence, you may be in deeper trouble, as they might be referring to several different subjects.
vague or 'need example'	The student may be talking in extremely general terms or using excessively abstract language.	Often, students think with examples and write using them to understand but do not share the examples with readers. This is usually a mistake. Good expository writing works back and forth, from specific detail to general or abstract discussion. Make sure that you are using concrete, clear examples to advance your argument.
w.c.	Word choice problems: these generally occur when a student doesn't actually know the meaning of a word but tries to use it anyway. Thesaurus abuse can contribute to this problem.	This is tricky because word repetition is also a problem, and precision writing sometimes demands technical language. The best advice is to stretch yourself when you write, pushing your vocabulary, but don't use a term unless you are familiar with it and sure what it means. It's probably not good to learn a word for the first time when you try to use it.

Essay Assessment Rubric

ANTH106 Drugs Across Cultures

Department of Anthropology

Student name: _____

	Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Thesis and relevance of arguments (25%)	Information presented bears little or no relation to the selected question. Merely summarizes scholarly sources without any independent thesis or argument.	Aware of the selected question but irrelevant or superfluous information is sometimes included. Contains several arguments but these are not effectively integrated into any overarching argument or thesis.	Aware of the selected question and offers a clear response. May occasionally offer superfluous or irrelevant information. Contains an independent thesis or central idea, but either it is not clearly articulated and/or it is minimally developed with evidence/examples.	Contains a clear and logical thesis that is identified early and then systematically supported with arguments, evidence, and a review of the literature. Very rarely offers information that does not advance lines of argument.	Thesis is identified early and then systematically supported with persuasive arguments and evidence. No superfluous information.
Research and referencing (25%)	Little or no reference to relevant scholarly literature; <i>and/or</i> inaccurate or incomplete references; <i>and/or</i> does not sufficiently reference claims of fact; <i>and/or</i> uncritical reliance on non-scholarly sources, e.g. Wikipedia and non peer reviewed popular literature or websites.	References relevant scholarly literature that was suggested in the essay handout, but may use these references in a vague and general way. Some reading beyond what was suggested in the essay handout.	Cites relevant reference from the course reader and the essay handout, and additionally shows evidence of independent reading in the literature, beyond what was suggested in the essay handout. Shows links between specific arguments made in the articles cited. Backs up all statements of fact, quotations, and paraphrased sentences with appropriate citation	Cites relevant references from the course reader and the essay handout, and additionally shows independent, wide reading in the literature, beyond what was suggested in the essay handout, Not only summarizes this literature but shows links, agreements, and differences between sources. Backs up all statements of fact with appropriate citations.	Goes beyond the 'very good' criteria to make a creative, original argument or show original insight based on your review of the scholarly literature; excellent references from a range of sources.

Word count provided? YES NO Word count within limits? YES NO

If not, how much does it go over? _____ words

Organisation and expression (25%)	Little or no structure. Moves randomly from topic to topic, or is off topic.	Confusing or unclear organization. Lacks a firm understanding of how paragraphs and topic sentences may be used to structure arguments. Makes little use of introduction or conclusion to signal response to the task and the structure of the materials to come.	Generally clear organization, although occasionally arguments appear to be out of place. Shows some understanding of how to use an introduction, conclusion, paragraphs and topic sentences to structure arguments.	Clear and logical structure announced in the introduction and conclusion and followed through in the main body. Effective use of paragraphs and topic sentences to support announced structure.	Clear, engaging and logical structure announced in the introduction and conclusion and followed through in the paragraph structure. Essay structure is self-designed and reflects creative understanding of how writing may be used effectively to make a point.
Communication / Writing (25%)	Shaky grasp of grammar fundamentals. Frequent spelling errors. Over-reliance on quotations. May be repetitive or use a lot of big words or jargon inappropriately.	Makes occasional grammatical or spelling errors. Expression may be convoluted or unclear. Over-reliance on quotations. May be repetitive and/or unconcise.	Makes occasional grammatical or spelling errors. Displays on occasion an understanding of how to present materials in a clear, concise and accessible fashion for readers.	Spelling or grammatical errors are rare. Displays on a number of occasions an understanding of how to present materials in a clear, concise and accessible fashion for readers.	Understands clearly how to present ideas in a concise, accessible and engaging fashion to readers. Spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors are extremely rare.

Comments:

Assessed by: _____

Grade: _____

Essay assignment Instructions and questions

Suggested readings accompany the questions but please note that these are only a starting point. You are encouraged to do your own research and consult relevant peer-reviewed sources.

There is no fixed number of required sources for this essay but a good rule of thumb is 5-6 sources per 1000 words (with at least two coming from your own independent research).

All essays must be submitted through Turnitin.

Please double space your paper and use 12pt font. Also, please use subheadings to structure your essay.

Please write no more than 1500 words. Reference lists are excluded from this word limit, but all other aspects of the essay (such as subheadings, in-text citation, title etc) are included.

Assessment criteria:

Please consult the rubric for detailed information. While writing your essay, please reflect on the below summarised points, which can be used as a kind of checklist.

Plan your essay so that:

- *It clearly addresses the essay question/topic.* The ability to address the essay topic (or essay question) is an important academic skill. Essays that are off topic and do not respond to what the question asks will lose several marks.
- *It has clear evidence of research:* Students should demonstrate that you have looked for interesting and relevant sources, have read them critically, and have been able to use them to support their argument. Familiarity and effective use of source material, is an important characteristic of an academic essay. The majority of sources must be relevant, academic and peer-reviewed.
- *It has a logical argument.* The essay requires a personal response from the student. The marker will be looking for and evaluating the student's capacity to provide an informed, logical and coherent argument. Students should avoid writing descriptive essays and should strive to write a critical essay that demonstrates your capacity for analytical thought.

- *It is well structured:* The essay should have three recognisable sections. *The introduction* sets the scene for the reader, explains what the problem is and its significance, and articulates the writer's argument. In *the body of the essay*, the writer provides evidence that supports the essay's central argument. The argument should be developed in a logical and coherent manner, and should avoid repetition and argumentation that is not directly relevant. *The conclusion* draws together the various strands of the argument, sums up, reasserts the validity of the central argument, and provides a general sense of closure of the essay. The conclusion can also suggest further issues to consider.
- *It has a good standard of English expression:* Students should strive to express themselves as effectively and clearly as possible. The conventions of contemporary English grammar should be observed. Although essays will not be primarily marked based on considerations pertaining to grammar, syntax and spelling, it is important to note that poor expression of English clouds what you are trying to convey in your essay, thereby affecting other criteria for marking (such as assessing whether the essay contains a clear and forceful argument). Essays that are substandard in terms of English expression may be asked to resubmit their essay (with several marks deducted as penalty). Students who feel they need support with their academic essay writing should contact respective support services offered by the University.
- *It is appropriately formatted:* The essay must be double spaced with generous margins, use a legible font (such as Times New Roman or Helvetica) and include page numbers.
- *It includes effective and correct use of citations:* You must **consistently** use Harvard in-text citations in your essay. A bibliography of all sources used in writing the essay must be appended to the essay.

Essay questions are on next page.

Write an essay on *one* of the following topics:

Word limit: 1500 words MAXIMUM (there's a penalty for exceeding the word limit, so don't go over 1500 words! There's no penalty for going *under* the word limit.)

Date Due: 3 Jan 2020

THE BELOW READINGS ARE JUST SUGGESTIONS FOR WHERE TO START WITH YOUR ESSAY RESEARCH – HOWEVER, INDEPENDENT RESEARCH IS EXPECTED. You should include at LEAST 2 independently sourced readings in your essay references, in addition to the required unit readings and the suggested references below.

1. Zinberg (1984: 6) proposes that “Social controls apply to the use of all drugs”. Discuss social controls surrounding drug use, as well as consider the extent to which they function to minimise harm amongst drug users in Western and non-Western societies.

Agar, M.H. (1977) 'Into that Whole Ritual Thing: Ritualist Drug Use Among Urban American Heroin Addicts'. In B.M. Du Toit (ed) *Drugs, Rituals and Altered States of Consciousness*. Rotterdam: Balkema, pp. 137-148.

Dobkin de Rios, M. (1972) 'Ayahuasca Healing Sessions'. In *Visionary Vine: Hallucinogenic Healing in the Peruvian Amazon*. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, pp. 99-116.

Grund, J-P, C.D. Kaplan & M DeVries (1993) 'Rituals of Regulation: Controlled and Uncontrolled Drug Use in Natural Settings'. In N Heather et al (eds), *Psychoactive Drugs and Harm Reduction: From Faith to Science*, London: Whurr Publishers, pp. 77-90.

Moore, D. (1993) 'Beyond Zinberg's 'Social Setting': a Processual View of Illicit Drug Use', *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 12: 413-421.

Moore, D. (1993) 'Social Controls, Harm Minimisation and Interactive Outreach: the Public Health Implications of an ethnography of Drug Use', *Australian Journal of Public Health*, 17(1): 58-67.

Harding, W.M. & N.E. Zinberg (1977) 'The Effectiveness of the Sub-culture in Developing Rituals and Social Sanctions for Controlled Drug Use'. In B.M. Du Toit (ed) *Drugs, Rituals and Altered States of Consciousness*. Rotterdam: Balkema, pp. 111-133.

Sansom, B. (1980) 'A Style For Grogging'. In *The Camp at Wallaby Cross*. Canberra: Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies.

Weil, A. (1973) 'Clues from the Amazon'. In *The Nature of Mind*, Jonathon Cape: London, pp. 98-115.

Zinberg, N.E. (1984) 'Historical Perspectives on Controlled Drug Use'. In *Drug, Set and Setting: the Basis for Controlled Intoxicant Use*. Yale University Press, pp. 1-18.

2. With *considered* reference to scholarly literature on the subject, assess the advantages and disadvantages of Cannabis Legalisation in Australia.

Dennis, M.L. & W White (1999) 'The Marijuana Legalization Debate: is There a Middle Ground'. In JA Inciardi (ed), *The Drug Legalization Debate*. Sage Publications.

Ferguson, D.M.. & L.J. Horwood (2000) 'Does Cannabis Use Encourage Other Forms of Illicit Drug Use?', *Addiction*, 95(4): 505-520.

Gerber, R.J. (2004) 'History of Demonizing Drugs'. In *Legalizing Marijuana: Drug Policy Reform and Prohibition Politics*, Westport, CT: Praeger, pp. 1-16.

Hall, W. (1997) 'The Recent Australian Debate About the Prohibition on Cannabis Use', *Addiction*, 92(9): 1109-1115.

Hall, W. (1998) 'Cannabis Use and Psychosis', *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 17: 433-444.

Hall, W. & R.L. Pacula (2003) 'Policy Alternatives'. In *Cannabis Use and Dependence: Public Health and Public Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 183-226.

Himmelstein, J.L. (1983) 'From Killer Weed to Drop Out Drug', *Contemporary Crises*, 7(1): 13-38.

Sarre, R. (1990) 'A Review of the Cannabis Expiation Notice Scheme in South Australia: Research Note', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 299-303.

MacCoun R.J. and P. Reuter *Drug War 'Heresies: Learning from Other Vices, Times, & Places'*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

McGeorge, J. & C.K. Aitken (1997) 'Effects of Cannabis Decriminalization in the Australian Capital Territory on University Students' Patterns of Use', *Journal of Drug Issues*, 27(4): 785-794.

3. How have illicit drugs become symbolic scapegoats in wider social conflicts? Discuss with reference to at least two countries.

Aurin, M. (2000) 'Chasing the Dragon: the Cultural Metamorphosis of Opium in the United States, 1825-1935', *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 14(3): 414-441.

Brady, M. (1990) 'Indigenous and government attempts to control alcohol'. *Contemporary Drug Problems* vol. 17(2).

Burr, A. (1984) 'The Ideologies of Despair: a Symbolic Interpretation of Punks and Skinheads' Usage of Barbiturates, *Social Science & Medicine*, 19(9): 929-938.

Dikkotter, F., L. Laamann & Z. Xun (2002) 'Narcotic Culture: A Social History of Drug Consumption in China', *British Journal of Criminology*, 42(2): 317-336.

Hoffman, J. (1990) 'The Historical Shift in the Perception of Opiates: From Medicine to Social Menace.' *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 22:53-62.

Himmelstein, J.L. (1983) 'From Killer Weed to Drop Out Drug', *Contemporary Crises*, 7(1): 13-38.

Manderson, D. (1995) 'Metamorphoses: Clashing Symbols in the Social Construction of Drugs', *The Journal of Drug Issues*, 25(4): 799-816.

Manderson, D. (2005). 'Possessed: drug policy, witchcraft and belief.' *Cultural Studies*, 19(1):35-62.

Montagne, M. (1988) The Metaphorical Nature of Drugs and Drug Taking, *Social Science & Medicine*, 26(4): 417-424.

Weimer, D. (2003) Drugs-as-a-Disease: Heroin, Metaphors, and Identity in Nixon's Drug War, *Janus Head*, 6(2): 260-281.

4. The United Nations has been aiming to reduce illicit crop cultivation by introducing other crop varieties as a substitute, as well as by offering alternative forms of development. Discuss the impact of both of these programs on illicit crop production and assess their viability.

Cohen, P.T. (2006) 'Help as a threat: Alternative development and the 'war on drugs' in Bolivia and Laos' *Development Bulletin* (Development Studies Network, ANU) No.69, Feb.

Farrell, G. (1998) 'A global empirical view of drug crop eradication and United Nations crop substitution and alternative development strategies' *Journal of Drug Issues* 28(2): 395-436.

Hellin, J. (2000) 'Coca eradication in the Andes: Lessons from Bolivia' in *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 12 (June):139-158.

Leons, M.B. and H.Sanabria eds (1997) *Coca, Cocaine and the Bolivian Reality*, State University of New York Press (several papers in this volume are relevant, in particular those by Leons and Sanabria).

Renard, R.D. (2001) *Opium Reduction in Thailand 1970-2000*, UNDCP, Silkworm Books, Chiang Mai.

Thoumi, F.E. (2002) 'The profitability of illicit crops and alternative development'. Paper prepared for the International Conference on Alternative Development in Drug Control and Cooperation, Feldafing, Jan.8-12.